

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1. (currently amended): A tape cartridge which can be inserted into a tape drive having an opening member, which can operatively engage with the tape cartridge at a time when the tape cartridge is inserted, and carrying out at least one of reading of data and writing of data, the tape cartridge comprising:

a reel on which a tape is wound;

a leader pin attached to a free end of the tape;

a case which is hollow, which accommodates the reel, and which has a front wall portion facing in a cartridge insertion direction;

a tape access opening provided at the case;

a pin holding portion, provided in the case in a vicinity of the tape access opening, for holding the leader pin such that the leader pin can be freely released;

an elastic member having a free end portion and a proximal portion, and anchoring the leader pin at the pin holding portion by pressing the leader pin by the free end portion; ~~and~~

a supporting portion provided in the case and having one or more anchor ribs and a plurality of holding ribs for reinforcing the front wall portion, the supporting portion supporting the proximal portion of the elastic member between the one or more anchor ribs and the holding ribs; and

a shielding member which can move reciprocatingly along an arc-shaped path of movement between a closing position for closing the tape access opening and an opening position for opening the tape access opening.

2. (original): The tape cartridge of claim 1, wherein the case has a side wall portion which is substantially parallel to the cartridge insertion direction, and an inclined wall portion which is connected to the front wall portion and the side wall portion and is inclined with respect to the cartridge insertion direction, and

the tape access opening is provided at the inclined wall portion of the case.

3. (original): The tape cartridge of claim 1, wherein the holding ribs are formed integrally with the front wall portion.

4. (original): The tape cartridge of claim 1, wherein the holding ribs project from an inner surface of the front wall portion toward an interior of the case.

5. (original): The tape cartridge of claim 1, wherein the elastic member is a plate spring.

6. (canceled).

7. (currently amended): The tape cartridge of claim ~~6~~1, further comprising an urging element which always urges the shielding member toward the closing position.

8. (currently amended): The tape cartridge of claim ~~6~~1, further comprising an operation portion provided at the shielding member, and due to the tape cartridge being inserted, the operation portion can move the shielding member toward the opening position while engaging with the opening member of the tape drive.

9. (original): The tape cartridge of claim 1, wherein the case is substantially rectangular in plan view.

10. (original): The tape cartridge of claim 1, wherein
the case is formed from an upper case and a lower case; and
a plurality of joining portions for joining the upper case and the lower case are provided.

11. (currently amended): A tape drive into which a tape cartridge can be inserted, and which carries out at least one of reading of data and writing of data, the tape cartridge having:

a reel on which a tape is wound;

a leader pin attached to a free end of the tape;

a case which is hollow, which accommodates the reel, and which has a front wall portion facing in a cartridge insertion direction;

a tape access opening provided at the case;

a pin holding portion, provided in the case in a vicinity of the tape access opening, for holding the leader pin such that the leader pin can be freely released;

an elastic member having a free end portion and a proximal portion, and anchoring the leader pin at the pin holding portion by pressing the leader pin by the free end portion; ~~and~~

a supporting portion provided in the case and having one or more anchor ribs and a plurality of holding ribs for reinforcing the front wall portion, the supporting portion supporting the proximal portion of the elastic member between the one or more anchor ribs and the holding ribs; and

a shielding member which can move reciprocatingly along an arc-shaped path of movement between a closing position for closing the tape access opening and an opening position for opening the tape access opening,

wherein the tape drive has an opening member which can operatively engage with the tape cartridge at a time when the tape cartridge is inserted.

12. (currently amended): The tape drive of claim 11, wherein, at the time when the tape cartridge is inserted, the opening member engages with ~~a~~the shielding member and can move the shielding member toward an opening position.

13. (original): The tape drive of claim 11, wherein the opening member projects in a direction traversing the tape cartridge insertion direction.

14. (original): The tape drive of claim 11, wherein the opening member enters into the case at the time when the tape cartridge is inserted.

15. (original): The tape drive of claim 14, wherein the opening member enters in from a slit provided at the case.

16. (new): The tape cartridge according to claim 1, further comprising a groove portion provided at an inner surface of the case in a vicinity of the front wall and the opening, wherein said groove portion holds the elastic member.

17. (new): The tape cartridge according to claim 1, further comprising a supporting rib wherein said supporting rib is a curved plate curving in a substantial arc-shape and supports a portion of the elastic member between the free end portion and the proximal portion.

18. (new): The tape drive according to claim 11, further comprising a groove portion provided at an inner surface of the case in a vicinity of the front wall and the opening, wherein said groove portion holds the elastic member.

19. (new): The tape drive according to claim 11, further comprising a supporting rib wherein said supporting rib is a curved plate curving in a substantial arc-shape and supports a portion of the elastic member between the free end portion and the proximal portion.

20. (new): The tape drive according to claim 11, wherein said anchor rib and said plurality of holding ribs are flat and plate-shaped and wherein said plurality of holding ribs are integral with and project perpendicularly to the inner surface of the front wall and inner surface of the case.

21. (new): The tape cartridge according to claim 1, wherein said anchor rib and said plurality of holding ribs are flat and plate-shaped and wherein said plurality of holding ribs are integral with and project perpendicularly to the inner surface of the front wall and inner surface of the case.